

# ***Iowa Outdoors***

## **Iowa Department of Natural Resources**

### **www.iowadnr.com**

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**June 29, 2004**

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## **CAMPERS GEARING UP FOR JULY 4 HOLIDAY WEEKEND**

DES MOINES – State park officials expect campgrounds in Iowa's state parks, recreation areas and forests to fill quickly for the holiday weekend. Some of the busier parks have had spaces claimed a week ahead of time, leaving some campers wondering where to go on Friday.

Campgrounds that normally fill fast include Lake Manawa, Prairie Rose, Springbrook, Lake of Three Fires, Viking Lake and Wilson Island in the southwest; Backbone, Lake Macbride and Pleasant Creek in the northeast; Gull Point, Clear Lake, Beeds Lake, Lewis and Clark and McIntosh Woods in the northwest; Rock Creek, Lake Ahquabi, Green Valley and Ledges in central and southern Iowa. No reservations are accepted in Iowa state parks.

"If you have a question about camping availability, feel free to call ahead to the park you are interested in," said Robert Schierbaum, southwest district supervisor. "Many times even busy parks still have sites available on Friday evening."

Iowa state parks that don't often fill their campgrounds and are nice, quiet places for the holiday are Lake Anita and Waubonsie in the southwest; Wapsipinicon and Bellevue in the northeast; Black Hawk, Pilot Knob and Stone in the northwest; Honey Creek and Red Haw in the south; and Geode, Lacey-Keosauqua, Lake Wapello and Lake Darling in the southeast; and Union Grove, Dolliver and Brushy Creek in central Iowa.

Lake Anita offers a large campground that is located close to Interstate 80. The tiered campground offers most campsites a view of the lake. A hard-surfaced, multi-purpose trail encircles the lake and connects the park to the town of Anita.

Waubonsie, in far southwest Iowa in the Loess Hills, is known for its wildlife, beautiful overlooks and hiking and equestrian trails. Waubonsie has an equestrian and non-equestrian campground and a golf course within walking distance.

Bellevue offers scenic views from high above the Mississippi River and close access to good fishing.

Finding a spot will be much easier if you plan to pitch a tent in the lesser-used parks in southern and southeastern Iowa. Electric sites will fill before non-electric sites.

“Parks in the more rural parts of the state will reward the camper with increased campsite availability and less congested campgrounds. Many of these southern and southeastern parks feature lakes with excellent fishing opportunities, miles of hiking trails and modern shower and restroom facilities,” said Jim Lawson, southern district supervisor.

In central Iowa, visitors to Union Grove can experience good fishing for bluegill, crappie, channel catfish and largemouth bass. There is unsupervised swimming on the east side of the lake. Dolliver offers bluffs and canyons along the Des Moines River and the Prairie Creek ford crossing. Park users enjoy fishing, canoeing and the scenic river views. Brushy Creek has more than 6,000 acres and is one of Iowa’s largest tracts of public outdoor recreation land. “Visitors can get a real sense of being away from it all while, at the same time, enjoying a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities such as camping, hunting, fishing, biking and trail riding,” said Greg Van Fosson, central Iowa district supervisor.

State parks staff will be working throughout the weekend, as the holiday weekends tend to be very busy times in many of Iowa’s state parks. “Park visitors are asked to make the effort to contact park employees if they see anything that needs their attention,” said Jerry Reisinger, northeast district supervisor.

“Because of the close proximity of many campers, it is wise to be considerate of other campers,” said Reisinger. While pets may be part of the family camping experience, barking dogs that aren’t used to so many strangers in close proximity can add to a noise problem in a busy campground. Quiet time is at 10:30 in state parks.

Making a list of things to bring such as a can opener, matches, bug repellent and sunscreen, will keep you prepared and make your experience an enjoyable one. While some parks or concessionaires provide firewood, bringing your own will ensure you have some, should the park run low. All fireworks except sparklers, caps and snakes are illegal. Please don’t bring fireworks into the parks.

During the holiday weekend, campers should monitor the weather and have a plan if severe weather occurs. Severe thunderstorms and tornadoes can occur quickly during the summer. If a storm does move toward a state park or recreation area, park staff will warn all visitors. Park users should seek shelter in the event of severe weather. Many out-of-state visitors will be staying in Iowa parks and recreation areas during the Fourth of July holiday and local campers are encouraged to let their out-of-state neighbors know where safe areas are if a threat of severe weather occurs.

Fireworks displays are scheduled for July 4 at Beeds Lake, Lewis and Clark and Lake of Three Fires. Lake Ahquabi will feature nightly interpretive programs throughout the weekend. Check with the local park staff for program topics.

For information about camping rates and calendar of events at Iowa state parks and recreation areas, visit the state park website at [www.exploreiowaparks.com](http://www.exploreiowaparks.com).

**For more information, contact Heather Cline at 515-281-5602.**

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## **IOWA PHEASANT HARVEST TOPS 1 MILLION AGAIN**

BOONE – More than 140,000 hunters harvested 1.08 million pheasants in Iowa last year, which was an increase of 48 percent over the 2002 harvest estimate of 729,000. The numbers are estimates compiled from a survey of licensed small game hunters.

Todd Bogenschutz, wildlife biologist at the DNR's Boone research station, said the forecast of more pheasants last fall was not lost on the hunters.

“We saw a nice increase in the number of pheasant hunters and we also had an increase in the number of non-resident hunters,” Bogenschutz said. An estimated 33,000 non-residents hunting pheasant in Iowa last year, mostly from surrounding states. About one third of the pheasant harvest was in northwest and north central Iowa.

The number of Iowa pheasant hunters increased 11 percent and the number of non-resident hunters increased 12 percent. Iowa hunters spent an average of nine days hunting last fall and harvested an average of eight birds. Nonresidents hunted an average of five days and harvested an average of seven birds. Three-quarters of the pheasant harvest happened in the first 31 days of the season.

Most other small game species also showed an increase in the number of hunters and harvest.

Bogenschutz said that nearly 25,000 hunters harvested more than 114,000 quail, which is a 79 percent increase over the 2002 harvest. Most of the quail was harvested in southwest and south central Iowa.

An estimated 4,000 partridge hunters harvested 8,200 partridge, an increase of 60 percent over 2002, but still the sixth lowest partridge harvest in 40 years of keeping records. Hunter numbers were down eight percent from 2002.

The rabbit harvest increased 46 percent over 2002. The 31,600 hunters harvested an estimated 244,000 cottontail rabbits. The number of resident rabbit hunters increased 18 percent, but non-resident hunters declined 35 percent. More than one-third of the rabbit harvest came from central and south central Iowa.

According to the survey, an estimated 326 hunters harvested 738 jackrabbits in 2003. Most of the harvest occurred in northwest Iowa.

**For more information, contact Bogenschutz at 515-432-2823.**

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## **PARK CLOSING, CONSTRUCTION UPDATES FOR THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND**

DES MOINES – Nine Eagles State Park will stay closed through the July 4 weekend. Roads into and through the park are closed for construction. Contractors were hopeful to have the work finished by the holiday, but heavy spring rains have delayed completion.

Pine Lake campground will reopen Friday, July 2, with updated facilities for campers. Visitors to the park can enjoy a totally redesigned campground with new camp-pads, new grills and surfacing with the electric sites upgraded to 50-amp service.

All of the other state parks with campgrounds are open for holiday weekend camping. Lake of Three Fires is being dredged and is closed to boating. Swimming, fishing and other lake activities are permitted. The lake level will remain as close to crest as possible. Other park activities are not impacted. A fireworks display is scheduled at Lake of Three Fires on July 4.

The bridge north of Brushy Creek State Park on county road P-73 is closed for construction. There is a short detour off of U.S. Hwy. 20 that leads south on Taylor Avenue, east on 250<sup>th</sup> and back to P-73, south of the bridge, then into the park.

Due to high water levels at Lake Red Rock, both of the boat ramps at Elk Rock State Park are closed.

For current information on construction activities, flooding updates, and park closings, visit the state parks web site at [www.exploreiowaparks.com](http://www.exploreiowaparks.com).

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## **BOATERS BEWARE OF AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS**

BOONE – Thousands of people will be heading to Iowa waterways with boats and personal watercraft in tow for the July 4 holiday weekend. The Iowa DNR is encouraging all boaters to take a minute to check for any unwanted hitchhikers, and protect Iowa lakes and streams.

Eurasian water milfoil, zebra mussels and other non-native aquatic species threaten Iowa waters. These aquatic invasive species can hitch a ride on boats, fishing gear, bait buckets and other items used in the water. When transported to another lake or stream, the aquatic invader can be released.

Aquatic invasive species can make lakes and rivers unusable by boaters, anglers and swimmers, reduce fish, wildlife and plant populations, clog water intakes and pipes, decrease property values, reduce economies of water-dependent communities and affect human health. Once a waterbody is infested, invasive species can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to treat and may be impossible to eradicate.

Eurasian water milfoil and zebra mussels are two aquatic invasive species that have hitchhiked their way into Iowa. They can spread easily, and new species can enter, if boaters do not take necessary steps to prevent their spread.

Boaters should follow a simple set of procedures each time after leaving the water, and know which lakes and rivers contain aquatic invasive species.

- Other tips to prevent the spread include:
- Remove any visible plants, fish, animals or mud from the boat, trailer and other equipment
- Drain water from all equipment – motor, livewell, bilge, transom well
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water including equipment, boots, clothing and even dogs. Before transporting to another waterbody, either rinse the boat and equipment with water 104 degrees or hotter, spray the boat and trailer with high-pressure water at a car wash or dry the boat and equipment for at least five days.
- Never release fish, animals or plants into a waterbody unless they came from that waterbody. Empty unwanted bait in the trash.

- Learn to identify aquatic invasive species and report any suspected infestations to the nearest DNR fisheries station.

**For more information, contact Kim Bogenschutz, aquatic invasive species program coordinator, at 515-432-2823.**

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## **LAKES AND RIVERS EXPECTING BIG CROWDS FOR HOLIDAY WEEKEND**

DES MOINES – The summer is here and the warmer weather predicted for the July 4 holiday weekend will send people to the water by the thousands.

“Hot summer weather and a long holiday weekend get people thinking ‘Got to boat – Get on the water’,” said DNR Recreational Safety Program Coordinator Rod Slings. “Our waterways will be crowded this weekend and law enforcement officers will be out among the boaters. Our goal is that everyone has a good, safe time on the water.”

Slings said boaters would be wise to go through a checklist before they leave home. They should make sure there are enough properly fitting lifejackets for everyone on board the vessel, that the fire extinguisher is on board and fully recharged and the lights work.

“Backing down the boat ramp is not the time to find out your battery is not working or that the throwable life preserver is in the basement,” Slings said. “We want everyone heading out to the waterways to have a good safe time and to be courteous to fellow boaters on the water and on the ramps.”

With the crowded conditions expected on Iowa waterways this weekend, it is critical to follow proper boating safety rules and operate defensively, he said. “The best piece of advice I can give boat operators is don’t operate faster than the conditions allow, and stay away from alcohol,” Slings said.

Personal watercraft operators aged 12 through 17 are reminded they must have successfully completed a boater education course and have their certificate of completion on board. A course is available on-line at [www.iowadnr.com/law/news/pwclaw.html](http://www.iowadnr.com/law/news/pwclaw.html)

Iowa DNR law enforcement officers will be covering big water bodies, small streams and lakes looking for all types of reckless operation that would indicate operating while intoxicated. If someone witnesses or suspects drunk boat operators, Slings said they should call 911 and they will be referred to state radio who will dispatch a conservation officer to investigate. Conservation officer’s cell phone numbers are listed

in the Iowa Boating Regulations and the Iowa Hunting, Fishing and Trapping regulations booklet.

**For more information, contact Slings at 515-281-8652.**

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[Hold this story until July 1]

## **CANOEING AND CLEANING THE RIVER**

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Heading toward shore, the load in the canoe began taking shape. Jutting scraps of sheet metal poked over the side. A bent iron fence post. Broken bottles and faded plastic bottles littered the bottom. More than you would expect on an early summer pleasure paddle. But this was much more than just a canoe trip.

These *Project Aware* canoeists hit the water at 5 a.m., clearing trash from the shoreline of Big Creek Lake, near Polk City. Four hours later, the last of them returned to 'trash central,' where the results of their scavenger hunt could be sorted. Bottles went in one pile. Aluminum cans in another. Plastic in another. A few feet away, the metal piled up. More than a ton of it came in today; items ranging from a 1949 license plate to an electric toaster, an egg beater, an aluminum ball bat and the requisite ductwork, sheet metal, barbed wire and fence posts. One of the last surprises was an old coffee-table-sized stereo speaker.

Each day of the weeklong excursion was spent cleaning stream or lake banks or improving habitat. "I am amazed at what people leave behind," admitted Cara Braveman. "We tried to pull out two cars but we had no place to put them. It's truly amazing to see all the garbage." Braveman, from Waterloo, enlisted in Project Aware with a friend. In all, 100 people spent all or part of the week on the roving trash detail.

"It is recreation and canoeing downriver, but most importantly, it is about understanding our watersheds," underscores Brian Soenen, from the Department of Natural Resources IoWater program, coordinator of the eight-day journey. "It's the things we do on the landscape--the roads we build, the fields that we farm, the buildings we construct—how those things affect what we see in our waterways." Each day, the group worked on a local project, usually at a state or county park or recreation area, alongside that agency's employees and volunteers.

But recreation was a big part of it, too. Heavy rains had the original route—the upper stretches of the Des Moines River—running too high for a week's worth of paddling. Plan B pieced together day trips on calmer waters, with participants still pitching their tents in the original campgrounds. "It's great to get on some stretches of

river that I've never done before," recalled Nathan Lein of Oelwein, just before pushing off into the north branch of the Skunk River, at Story City. "(I've paddled) quite a few rivers in northeast Iowa; the Upper Iowa, the Turkey, the Volga, but (this) is more challenging; to get into a canoe and test your skill against the water." The high water actually opened up a couple streams that could never have been navigated in a normal flow year.

Last year, in the inaugural Project Aware, canoeists explored the Maquoketa River from Backbone State Park to its confluence with the Mississippi River. Next year, it will shift to northwest Iowa, to enlist new paddlers...and to keep the view changing for those who return. "I'd do it again in a minute," admitted Larry Taylor of Solon. "The people were just fantastic. And the scenery! I never thought of the Des Moines River with a deep valley, the bluffs. Parts of it went straight up and down."

He and his wife, Carolyn (my neighbors, by the way), found out about Project Aware after joining the IoWater monitoring program. Besides the jaw-dropping sights, there was plenty of work in their 'working vacation.' "The physical part of it was great," offered Carolyn. "It was challenging, but you felt pretty good after it." She thought back to what was probably the crown jewel of their work days; clearing over two acres of invasive poplar trees, on a parcel of Webster County conservation department ground. A few prairie forbs are hanging on. As the area is burned and re-grows, the never-plowed-prairie beneath will take off. She also gave high marks to the various evening programs; ranging from local geology to learning about Iowa bats. "They were topics we never would have thought about otherwise."

Hard work and fast-paced river canoeing made for good friends, in a hurry. "Just a great group of people to be with," proclaimed Greg Soenen, of Goldfield. "There's a guy from a sausage place, a carpenter, a teacher. Everybody has a different job, but we all have the same interests. We all want to have clean water. Cleaning the trash isn't going to solve it, but it gets people aware of our waterways."

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## ***IOWA FISHING REPORT***

**For the week of June 29, 2004**

**[www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com)**

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.



## **Northeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15:** The Mississippi River at Guttenberg is 72 degrees and the water is beginning to clear from recent rains. Water levels are falling rapidly and should recede throughout the week. Most boat ramps are open again, but some may still be out of operation until the debris is cleared. Bluegills and white bass are being taken on small jigs or worms on a hook fished in the tailwater areas at **Lock & Dam 9 and 10** (Guttenberg). Freshwater drum and channel catfish are biting along rocky shorelines and flooded islands throughout **Pools 9 to 11**. Walleyes are being caught on running crankbaits in Winneshiek and Minnesota sloughs (**Pool 9**). River tailwater level at Bellevue is 12.5 feet and dropping rapidly. Freshwater drum fishing is excellent on night crawlers fished along the shorelines and in current areas in **Pools 12 to 15**. Channel catfish are fair in **Pools 12 to 15** on cheese or stink baits fished in side sloughs or in the breaks around grass in the flooded timber. Largemouth bass are hitting top-water lures and spinner baits fished in the clearer backwater sloughs in **Pools 12 to 15**. Bluegills are also biting on night crawlers in the backwater areas in **Pools 12 to 15**. Some bluegills are still spawning so fish in the shallows for best results. A few walleye are being taken in **Pools 12 to 15**. Side slough and main channel areas are best, but be prepared to move to find fish. With the river dropping rapidly, walleyes are on the move.

The **Upper Iowa** (Winneshiek and Allamakee), **Turkey** (Clayton) and the upper stretches of the **Cedar River** (Mitchell and Floyd) are cloudy, but clearing up and becoming more fishable.

**Cedar River** (Black Hawk): Channel catfish are biting on night crawlers and stink baits.

**Lake Delhi** (Delaware): Channel catfish are good on night crawlers fished along the bottom.

**Meyer Lake** (Winneshiek): Bluegill fishing is excellent using a small piece of worm fished under a bobber. Largemouth bass are hitting plastic worms. Channel catfish fishing is excellent on chicken liver or worms fished off the bottom.

**Volga Lake** (Fayette): Bluegill fishing is excellent on a piece of night crawler. Channel catfish are also being caught on chicken liver and worms fished along the dam. Largemouth bass fishing is good to excellent.

**Lake Hendricks** (Howard): Bluegill fishing is excellent on red worms fished under a bobber. Largemouth bass are hitting plastic worms. Channel catfish are good to excellent on worms and chicken liver.

**Big Woods and South Prairie Lakes** (Black Hawk): Bluegill fishing is good using wax worms or pieces of a night crawler.

**Trout** fishing and stream conditions are good to excellent. The **Turkey River** is back in its banks and clarity is improving each day. At this time of year, the Turkey River is stocked twice a week for anglers to try their luck with hungry rainbow, brown and brook trout. Anglers can access to the Turkey River at the Big Spring Trout Hatchery located approximately 10 miles northwest of Elkader. While there, check out the state's largest coldwater spring which produces 15,000 to 25,000 gallons of water per minute. For current trout stocking information on northeast Iowa trout streams, call the trout stocking hotline at 563-927-5736. You can also access the trout stocking calendar through the internet at [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com) and go to the fish and fishing web pages.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

### **Northwest**

**Spirit Lake** (Dickinson): Walleye fishing continues to be excellent, although sorting is required to catch legal sized fish. Some limits are being taken. Anglers are having success off Buffalo Run, Cottonwood and Big Stoney Point, and in Angler's Bay. Drift fishing using leeches or night crawlers, anchor with slip bobbers or trolling with night crawler harnesses or crankbaits have all produced fish. Remember, the Iowa Great Lakes has a 14-inch minimum length limit on walleyes, and allows only one fish over 20 inches to be kept. Largemouth bass fishing is good. Fish close to docks and in Angler's Bay near the reeds. Fishing is best using soft plastic presentations. Yellow perch fishing is slow, but some are being caught while fishing for walleyes. Bluegills are being caught in Angler's Bay. The muskie action is starting to pick up. A few are being caught in Angler's Bay and in the southeast corner of the lake.

**West Okoboji** (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is fair to good. Fish the new weed growth for the best action. Spinners with leeches are producing the best fishing. Night fishing has slowed, but fish can be caught on crankbaits. Smallmouth bass action continues over the rock piles. Remember the 15-inch minimum length on smallmouth. Smaller northern pike are being caught along the weed edges. But persistence will be rewarded with larger fish. Cast traditional northern pike baits. Bluegill and crappie fishing is good in 8 to 12 feet of water. Largemouth bass fishing is good around weed edges and large wooden docks.

**East Okoboji** (Dickinson): Anglers are catching some keeper walleyes off the docks in the evenings. Trolling the basin with crankbaits during the daylight hours is producing some legal sized fish. Bluegill fishing continues to be good in the shallow water habitat. Channel catfish action is starting to pick up using traditional baits. Some white bass are starting to show up.

**Silver Lake** (Dickinson): The walleye action has slowed, but persistence will be rewarded with some nice fish. Troll crankbaits from a boat or fish from shore with a lighted bobber at night for the best action.

**Center Lake** (Dickinson): Bluegill fishing is good. An occasional walleye is being caught.

**Twelve Mile Lake** (Emmet): Bullhead fishing is good.

**Little Sioux River** (Buena Vista and Clay): Catfish action is excellent up and down the river on stink bait and sour carp. Anglers are catching some walleyes at the Linn Grove Dam.

**Lake Pahoja** (Lyon): Channel catfish action is superb mainly in the evening hours using traditional baits. Fishing is good for small crappies.

**Elk Lake** (Clay): Perch fishing is good with anglers catching nice sized fish.

**Lost Island** (Clay and Palo Alto): The walleye action continues, but the action has slowed somewhat. Use bottom bouncers and spinners tipped with night crawlers or leeches. If the bullheads are active, switch to twisters and crankbaits.

**Five Island** (Palo Alto): Walleye action continues to be good with most fish caught on crankbaits.

**Silver Lake** (Palo Alto): Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers. Anglers are catching some crappies near the east boat ramp.

**Willow Creek** (Osceola): Largemouth bass fishing is good in the evening hours using scum frogs or rats on top of vegetation, or buzzbaits along the edges.

**Ocheyedan Pits** (Osceola): Bluegill fishing is good on the submerged humps using small jigs or small hook and worm. Channel catfish can be caught on the west side of the lake using traditional catfish bait.

**Dog Creek** (O'Brien): Crappies are good to excellent using small minnows.

**Storm Lake** (Buena Vista): Channel catfish are fair to good using night crawlers, leeches and shad entrails. Anglers are catching some walleyes trolling crankbaits, along with some white bass.

**Black Hawk Lake** (Sac): Channel catfish fishing is good on a variety of baits. Walleyes are starting to bite leeches.

**Arrowhead Lake** (Sac): Bluegills are catching bluegills on small jigs tipped with night crawlers.

**Brushy Creek** (Webster): Bluegill fishing is best in shallow water. Walleyes are biting on leeches in 10 to 20 feet of water. Bass are close to shore in the rocks. Crappies are hard to find, but a few are being caught on small jigs tipped with a minnow.

**Clear Lake** (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing is fair using live bait and spinners or trolling crankbaits. The north shoreline has been the best for walleyes. Remember the 14-inch minimum length limit. Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers on the bottom. Channel catfish fishing is good using chicken liver and dead chubs.

**Briggs Woods** (Hamilton): Bluegills are hitting on small pieces of night crawler along the vegetation line. Largemouth bass fishing is good using plastics and spinner baits.

**Little Wall** (Hamilton): Largemouth bass are biting on spinner baits. Bluegill fishing is good on pieces of night crawler. Channel catfish are biting in the dredge cut on dead chubs and stink bait.

**For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.**

### **Southwest**

**Viking** (Montgomery): Crappie and bluegill fishing is good around aerators. Channel catfish fishing is fair using night crawlers or liver. Largemouth bass fishing has picked up in the evening around structure.

**Cold Springs** (Cass): Fishing is good for crappies around the aerators. Channel catfish fishing is good.

**Manawa** (Pottawattamie): Fishing is excellent for channel catfish on Boy Scout Island. Walleyes are being caught on the west shore along the rocks.

**Orient** (Adair): Channel catfish fishing is good.

**Mormon Trail** (Adair): Walleye fishing is good using crankbaits or jigs. The 7 to 9-inch crappies have moved away from shore and to 6 to 8 feet of water. Fishing is good for largemouth bass and bluegills. Channel catfish are good using night crawlers or liver.

**Prairie Rose** (Shelby): Fishing is good for 7-inch crappies in 6 to 8 feet of water using jigs and minnows around rocks and woody structure. Bass fishing is good. Anglers are catching channel catfish on liver. Fishing is good for small bluegills near shore.

**DeSoto Bend** (Harrison): Walleye and crappie fishing is fair. Walleyes being harvested are 15 to 16 inches. Anglers also are catching good numbers of largemouth bass. Carp are being caught near shore.

**Littlefield Lake** (Audubon): Fishing is good for large bluegills near shore with night crawlers. Channel catfish fishing is good.

**Willow** (Harrison): Largemouth Bass fishing is fair in the evenings around structure. Bluegills are good along weed edges. Channel Catfish are being caught in the evenings using chicken liver.

**Southwest Iowa Farm Ponds**: Bluegill and largemouth bass fishing is excellent. A lot of bluegill can be caught using night crawlers. Remember to ask permission and clean up after yourself.

**Big Creek** (Polk): Bluegill fishing has been excellent using small hooks and worms, with fish 8 inches or larger common. Crappie fishing has been fair primarily in deeper water. Channel catfish fishing has been good using night crawlers and cut and stink baits. Largemouth bass have been caught using casting plugs, although most remain below the legal length limit.

**Lake Ahquabi** (Warren): Channel catfish fishing is good with cut and stink baits. Bluegill and redear sunfish fishing has been fair to good using jigs or hook/bobber combination with worms and wax worms. Crappie fishing has been slow to fair with the majority caught in deeper water with jigs and minnows. Largemouth bass fishing has been good, although most fish are below the legal length limit.

**Hooper Lake** (Warren): Bluegill fishing has been good using worms and jigs. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair to good using buzzbaits and surface lures.

**Hickory Grove** (Story): Bluegill fishing has been good using worms. Channel catfish fishing has been good on night crawlers and largemouth bass fishing has been fair to good using top-water and buzzbaits. Crappie fishing has been good in deeper water, although fishing is spotty.

**Don Williams** (Boone): Fishing is good to excellent for 2-pound and larger channel catfish using night crawlers and cut baits toward the north end of the lake. Crappie fishing has been fair using minnows and jigs with most fish caught in deeper water. Bluegill fishing is has been slow, although some nice fish have been caught. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair on surface plugs and crankbaits.

**Rock Creek Lake** (Jasper): Channel catfish fishing has been good to excellent along the shorelines and shallow water. Crappie fishing is fair using minnows and jigs, although fish have moved to deeper water. Bluegill fishing has been slow to fair.

**Easter Lake** (Polk): Channel catfish fishing has been fair to good on night crawlers and stink baits. Crappie and bluegill fishing has been slow to fair. Use jigs and minnows for crappie and worms for bluegill. Largemouth bass fishing has been slow to fair also, with the best catches along the face of the dam.

**Red Rock** (Marion): Crappie and white bass fishing is slow to fair in the bays and coves. Channel catfish fishing has fair, with the better areas in bay and cove areas using night crawlers and worms.

**Red Rock tailwater** (Marion): Crappie and white bass fishing has been fair in the tailwater using jigs and minnows. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using traditional baits.

**Roberts Creek** (Marion): Crappie fishing has been fair using jigs with minnows and/or night crawlers and channel catfish have been hitting on night crawlers.

**Saylorville Lake** (Polk): The reservoir is still high and turbid and there is considerable floating debris. Boaters need to be extra cautious on the reservoir. White bass fishing has been good trolling crankbaits. A few walleyes have been caught. Crappie fishing is spotty, but if fish are located they are normally 9 inches and larger. Best success has been with jigs and minnows.

**Saylorville Lake tailwater/river** (Polk): White bass and channel catfish fishing has been good below Saylorville Reservoir. Channel catfish have been hitting on night crawlers. Channel catfish fishing has also been good in the Cottonwood and Sycamore access areas below the reservoir.

**Three Mile** (Union): Channel catfish are being caught with night crawlers or cut baits. Crappies are moving out to 8 to 10 feet of water. Bluegills are biting on night crawlers or wax worms in shallow areas. Largemouth bass and walleye fishing is good all over the lake.

**Twelve Mile** (Union): Fishing for channel catfish is good using night crawlers or liver. Walleyes are being caught using leeches.

**Icaria** (Adams): Fishing is good for catfish using night crawlers, cut bait and liver.

**Green Valley** (Union): Crappies are being caught over structure in 8 to 10 feet of water. Some nice bluegill can be caught in the shallows with night crawlers or wax worms. Channel catfish can be caught in the bays using night crawlers.

**Little River** (Decatur): Crappies are biting over rocks or in flooded trees in 8 to 10 feet of water. Catfish can be caught in the bays using liver or night crawlers.

**Slip Bluff** (Decatur): Channel catfish are being caught in the bays.

**West Lake Osceola** (Clarke): Bluegill and largemouth bass fishing is excellent in the timbered coves and along the dam. Crappies are in 8 to 10 feet of water in the flooded trees.

**Old Corning** (Adams): Bluegills are biting well on the dam and in the bays on night crawlers or wax worms.

**Fogle Lake** (Ringgold): Crappies can be caught in the flooded trees. Some bluegill can be caught off the west shore and in the west bay. The lake is currently being lowered to improve fish growth but is still good for fishing.

**Walnut Creek Marsh** (Ringgold): Bluegill and crappie can be caught along the south shore and around the jetties.

**Windmill Lake** (Taylor): Bluegills can be caught with night crawlers in the shallows.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

### **Southeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19:** Fishing on the Mississippi River has been fair. The water temperature at Muscatine is 69 degrees and the river pool stage is 14.39 and is

expected to drop throughout the week. On **Pool 16**, Sunset Marina near Rock Island continues to produce walleye and sauger on crankbaits and jigs. White bass and walleye are also being caught in the tailwaters below **Dam 15** and around Credit Island. Catfish have been good on various baits. **Pools 16 to 19** continue to be good for channel catfish on night crawlers, leeches, dip baits, paste baits and chicken liver. White bass have been fair in the tailwaters and a few walleye and sauger are also being caught.

**Lake Darling** (Washington): Catfishing has been good to excellent with the morning bite being the best. Stink bait seems to be the best bait, followed closely by chicken liver.

**Lake Geode** (Henry): Bluegill fishing has been good to excellent, depending on the weather, with fish up to 10 inches being caught. Channel catfish fishing is starting to pick up near the dam.

**Lake Belva Deer** (Keokuk): Bluegill fishing has been excellent. The fish have moved off the beds and into the deeper water in the trees. Anglers using an ice fishing jig and wax worm have been doing the best. Anglers are still catching good numbers of the 10 to 12-inch bass and there are also some legal 15-inch fish being caught.

**Lake Rathbun** (Appanoose): Walleye action has slowed somewhat. However anglers have had some success with night crawlers on spinners or Lindy Rigs while fishing the Rolling Cove and Island View areas. Look for points and drop-offs. Crappie fishing has also slowed, but anglers will find success with suspended fish throughout the lake. Channel catfish have been biting on chicken liver and night crawlers. The Bridgeview area has been very productive for catches of channel catfish.

**Lake Sugema** (Van Buren): Largemouth bass have been hitting on artificial lures. Top-water action has been particularly productive in the upper half of the lake near structure. Morning and evening has been the best times. The quality of bluegills is excellent and they have been hitting on small jigs tipped with a chunk of night crawler.

**Lake Miami** (Monroe): Crappies and bluegills have been biting on small jigs. The areas of standing timber have been the most productive. Channel catfish have been biting on chicken liver and other assorted scent baits.

**Lake Wapello** (Davis): Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial lures. Channel catfish have been biting on liver. Bluegills have been hitting small jigs fished around the lily pads. Some bluegill anglers have had success drifting over suspended fish with night crawlers and jigs.

**Lake Macbride** (Johnson): Crappie fishing has been fair on small jigs tipped with small minnows or wax worms.

**Coralville Reservoir** (Johnson): Water levels are slowly dropping and all ramps, except Sandy Beach, are now open. Some channel catfish are being caught on dead shad.

**Pleasant Creek** (Linn): Perch fishing is excellent using worms on the bottom and leeches under bobbers. Some bluegills are still being caught with worms. A few nice-sized walleyes are being taken with leeches under a slip bobber or trolling crankbaits. Channel catfish are biting better on live/dead bait on the bottom as well as worms under bobbers. Largemouth bass fishing has been excellent on night crawlers around the jetties and artificial baits elsewhere in the lake. Remember there is an 18-inch minimum length limit on largemouth at Pleasant Creek.

**Kent Park Lake** (Johnson): Fishing is fair to good for 10 to 14-inch largemouth bass. Bluegills continue to be caught on worms. The channel catfish bite is good to excellent early and late in the day.

**Diamond Lake** (Poweshiek): Fishing is good for channel catfish on night crawlers and bluegills on small worms. Look for the bluegills around structure and on the weed lines.

**Hannan Lake** (Benton): Bluegill fishing is a little slower but some are being caught around brush on small worms. Channel catfish fishing is picking up and are being caught on stink bait. Some 12 to 16-inch bass are also being caught on various lures/baits.

**Rodgers Lake** (Benton): The channel catfish fishing is good on stink bait and worms. Bluegills are also being taken on worms. A few 12 to 16-inch largemouth bass are also being caught.

**Union Grove Lake**, Union Grove State Park (Tama): Channel catfish are being caught on stink bait and chicken liver around the jetties and along the dam.

**Wapsipinicon River** (Linn): A few walleyes are being taken on jigs and live bait.

**Iowa River** (Washington and Louisa): Catfishing is picking up around River Junction and should continue to improve as the river stabilizes. The catfish are spawning so look to the high cut banks for some concentrations of fish.

**For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.**

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